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SIPDIS

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TAGS: [PREL](#) [MARR](#) [EAID](#) [RS](#) [GG](#) [LO](#)
SUBJECT: GASPAROVIC'S REASSURANCES ON GEORGIA CONTRAST WITH
PM FICO

REF: STATE 86108

Classified By: DCM KEITH A. EDDINS FOR REASONS 1.4 B AND D

[¶1.](#) (C) Ambassador met with Slovak President Gasparovic August 19 to underscore the U.S. position on Georgia (reftel and previous); to urge continued constructive Slovak engagement within NATO, the EU, and the OSCE; and to note that the U.S. disagreed with Prime Minister Fico,s unhelpful public statements suggesting Georgia had provoked the Russian invasion (although later Fico said he had been misquoted). In response, Gasparovic reiterated Slovakia,s strong support for Georgia,s sovereignty and territorial integrity; he added that Slovakia viewed South Ossetia and Abkhazia as being intrinsic parts of Georgia.

[¶2.](#) (C) Gasparovic continued that Slovakia supports a negotiated longer-term agreement to solve the conflict. While unsure of what structure such an agreement might take, he stated emphatically that Russian troops must withdraw from Georgian territory in fulfillment of the ceasefire agreement. Gasparovic also said that Slovakia stood behind the U.S. in demanding free access for humanitarian assistance and full and complete implementation of the six-point agreement.

[¶3.](#) (C) Slovakia would not endorse any dismemberment of Georgia, Gasparovic said, adding that for the same reason he continues to object to Kosovo,s independence. When the Ambassador urged Gasparovic to include mention of Georgia in any remarks he makes commemorating the upcoming 40th anniversary of the 1968 Soviet invasion of Czechoslovakia, the President demurred, asserting the two cases were not perfect historical parallels. The Ambassador acknowledged certain differences, but underscored the fact that both involved Moscow seeking to impose its will upon another country by force of arms. The President agreed with this parallel.

[¶4.](#) (C) Comment: Gasparovic now plans to attend this year's UNGA, which should allow the Slovaks to present a more nuanced position than Fico often takes. That said, since his initial rationalization of Russian actions, Fico himself has called for an end to the violence and killing, as well as for both parties to find a negotiated solution. Fico has also avoided any further comments blaming Georgia for provoking the conflict. End comment.

OBSITNIK